

To so many people in this country, Fred Wolfe was a friend. He was a spiritual leader. He was a life coach. He was a father figure. He was a big brother. That is why we all simply called him Brother Fred.

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Brother Fred had a God-given ability to make everyone feel special, and he truly believed that everyone was special. Every waking moment in Brother Fred's life, he understood that God was not only watching him, but God knew exactly what His next step would be in Fred's life.

Brother Fred, on numerous occasions, would tell me that everything in our life is controlled by God, and everything was put here to serve God.

Later in life, Brother Fred's health started breaking down, but he never took his eyes off of God. I remember when he had open-heart surgery and the men from the church would stay with him to take care of his needs. One night when I was there with Brother Fred, I asked him how his open-heart surgery had played a role in God's master plan.

He told me, I don't know. He said, It is part of the plan, but I don't know. I am here to serve. I thought that was a pretty strange response seeing he just had his chest cracked open and everything moved around. But he knew he would wait. He told me, We may never know; then again, we may.

Just a few minutes later, a nurse came walking in to take his vital signs—of course, as they do in the hospitals and keep you awake all night—while doing so, he smiled at Brother Fred and said, You don't remember me, but a few years ago, I got saved under your ministry.

Unfortunately, I have slipped away from God, and I am paying the price in my family today.

With all the tubes, with all the monitors, with everything going off in that room, Brother Fred stopped what he was thinking and doing and prayed with that man. He left with much higher spirits than he actually entered with.

As we sat there quietly, I was thinking, Did God use Fred Wolfe in this position because of this man? I looked up and made eye contact with Fred, who was laying in the bed, he simply winked and rolled over and went to sleep like he knew that was the answer.

For thousands of people who were saved under his ministry, raised their family with his wisdom, and learned that God is the most important thing in their life, I say this is not good-bye, for we will see you again. We will see Miss Anne, and we will see Brother Fred at the right hand of God.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DURANGO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Mrs. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as some extraordinary Durango High School students are making news and scientific history.

A team from Nevada's Third District, Durango High School, recently became one of only 60 teams nationwide to win the NASA TechRise student challenge. This year the challenge was to design an experiment that could be tested on a NASA-sponsored balloon flight.

The Durango team won with their entry, Project Nighthawk, which they will continue to work on for the rest of the school year. This summer, the project will be tested in a high-altitude balloon flight.

This is a big deal, but I know it is just the start of some amazing endeavors into STEM that these Durango Trailblazers will make in their future careers. These students will be mentored by the best and the brightest researchers and have an invaluable opportunity to learn about the edge of the Earth's atmosphere.

The ingenuity of these talented Nevadans reminds us that when it comes to exploration of our final frontier, the best is yet to come. I have no doubt that we will all benefit from their contributions in years to come.

Congratulations, Durango High School's Project Nighthawk.

REINING IN OUR NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss our national debt. In 2022, Speaker MCCARTHY unveiled the Commitment to America which outlines the Republican platform for governing as we took control of the House in the 118th Congress.

Through our plan, it is critical we support policies that lead to a strong, healthy economy, fight inflation, and lower the cost of living. We must rein in reckless spending here in Washington and root out waste, fraud, and abuse in government.

For the last 2 years, the Biden administration has been left unchecked. Because of their policies, we have seen record-breaking inflation, skyrocketing gas and grocery prices, and increases to daily expenses. Hard-working families are forced to decide between feeding their families or paying the heat and electric bills.

These economic hardships are brought on by unrestricted reckless spending. That irresponsible spending stops now. With \$31.4 trillion in national debt, House Republicans are committed to finding a reasonable, practical, and responsible solution to raising the debt ceiling. Just like millions of Americans are forced to make difficult financial decisions to make ends meet, we must finally address out-of-control government spending if we want to put America on a better fiscal path.

Mr. Speaker, I heard from hundreds of my constituents who are concerned about America's checkbook. On December 16, 2021, Congress voted to increase the national borrowing limit to \$31.4 trillion, an increase of \$2.5 trillion more than the previous allowance. This bill kicked the proverbial can down the road until now when we are, once again, faced with raising the Federal debt ceiling even further.

In recent years, the Federal debt has ballooned because of many of the Biden administration's policies, including the student loan repayment pause and forgiveness, Congressional Democrats' multitrillion-dollar spending spree, and rising interest rates stemming from historic inflation.

The first step toward reducing the debt is controlling the annual deficit. To fully address the drivers of the national debt, Members of both parties and the President will have to come to an agreement in addressing unchecked mandatory spending and reckless discretionary spending priorities.

Mr. Speaker, as part of my commitment to America, I will continue to work to rein in government waste, fraud, and abuse, while limiting skyrocketing government program costs and finding solutions on reducing our national debt.

RAISING AND EXTENDING THE DEBT CEILING 78 TIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, since 1960, Congress has raised and extended the debt limit 78 times over a 63-year period.

Let's put this in perspective: 49 times under Republican administrations, 29 times under Democratic Presidents. Sixty-three years we have raised the debt ceiling 78 times.

We are one of only two democratic nations with a statutory debt ceiling and the only one, because of the magnificent extent of our country, the U.S. dollar being the common currency of the world that can threaten a global economic crisis—think about that—by playing around with the debt ceiling.

The debt ceiling has no impact on government spending. Why? Because it only commences to pay the bills that we have already committed ourselves to. Both Republicans and Democrats have passed legislation that has created debt, that requires us to pay Social Security, that requires us to pay other mandatory programs in which there has been bipartisan support for.

Instead, this debt ceiling restricts the Treasury, if, in fact, we do not lift the debt ceiling, from paying those bills. That is why for over 63 years, 78 times, the Congress has chosen to raise the debt ceiling. Why? Because we don't want to put the liability of the world's economy, let alone the U.S. economy, at risk.

We don't want to be deadbeats, right? I think most Americans feel they